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LA GUERRA DE GUERRILLAS

Castro's top field commander tells how they won

Condensation of a book by

CHE GUEVARA



about this article

One of the quixotic facts of this century is that pathologically secretive revolutionaries and dictators have outlined in great detail their plans for seizing and maintaining power. Even more quixotic, however, has been the refusal of the normally frank democracy and its leaders to believe these writings even when the unfolding sequence of events follows the pattern outlined in the writings.

If we Americans can rationalize away our lack of belief in the writings of Lenin, Hitler, Mao and Stalin because of our general non-involvement with the countries involved prior to World War II, we cannot laugh away or ignore either the threats of Khrushchev or the dangers to our national interests by recent events in Cuba. Therefore, this abridgment of a book by Ernesto Guevara, Fidel Castro's field commander during the Cuban Revolution, is of major interest and concern to all of us. Che Guevara, an Argentine by birth, is now President of the National Bank of Cuba and a driving, if not the driving force, in pushing Cuba ever deeper into the Communist orbit.

It is known that Che Guevara has long been a Communist, although the record doesn't show that he ever received a formal Communist education in Moscow. He must, however, have read many of the works of leading Communists. Consequently, he has undoubtedly been influenced by the writings of Mao Tse-tung on guerrilla warfare. The exact extent is unknown although there is a uniformity in thought as the various editorial notes accompanying this condensation will indicate.

This book is a warning similar to other revolutionary writings. On the more hopeful side, one sees guerrilla-like events also beginning to occur in Cuba itself, for it would appear that Communist revolutionaries quickly forget the high ideals they proclaim when fighting.

At the same time it must be noted that the U. S. press has reported that Spanish language editions of this book are flooding Latin America and that Moscow has announced that a Russian language edition is to be published later this year.

There is in all this a major concern for soldiers. The United States Army has had little experience against guerrillas since the Indian wars. Our modern wars have been tidy affairs with little or no disruption of our rear areas

except by normal enemy bombardment, or other action with which we were equally normally prepared to cope. Therefore, we have no body of experience for dealing with rear-area security when presented with a guerrilla threat.

Field Manual 31-21, *Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations*, concerns itself almost exclusively with the use of guerrillas in support of our operations and says nothing about defense. Our doctrine would appear to be contained in the statement, "security is the commander's responsibility." This, however, is insufficient, as the German experience in Russia proved. Too late, the Germans began to organize anti-guerrilla bands, to create methods of procedure and to prepare special units. The damage had been done. The senseless terrorism and reprisals of the SS could not be undone and the entire German rear area was aflame with guerrilla action. It is an accepted fact that this guerrilla activity was a major factor in the Russian victory.

While present troop training schedules call for sessions devoted to defense against guerrillas, we have developed no great body of official literature on the subject.

It is true that FM 31-15, *Operations Against Airborne Attack, Guerrilla Action, and Infiltration* exists. However, it was published in January 1953 and includes very little concerning anti-guerrilla tactics as such. In essence, this manual states: "The commander charged with the responsibility of defending an area exposed to a guerrilla threat must skillfully combine offensive and defensive tactics in a ratio commensurate with the forces which he has available." However, it is too late to try the "skillfully combine" advice in the midst of a full-scale guerrilla threat. It must be done now. Therefore, the abridgment that follows should provide much material for sober speculation. How would we as an army meet concerted guerrilla activity, given the austerity of our current organization?

A few words about the condensation that follows are in order. Repetitive material has been omitted. However, only a few changes have been made in the wording so as to insure retention of the full flavor of the original work. This has meant, in some cases, retention of the tortured and involved phraseology which appears to be characteristic of works of this type.

The large type briefings at the beginning of each section are editorial insertions that do not appear in the original.

Essentials of Guerrilla Warfare

The guerrilla force is the fighting vanguard of the people's struggle against their oppressors and its agent—the professional army. Guerrillas strike and flee . . . give the enemy no rest. Their final purpose is to annihilate the enemy and to obtain victory.

The armed victory of the Cuban people over the Batista dictatorship, an epic triumph recognized throughout the world, clearly demonstrates the ability of a people to free themselves, by means of guerrilla warfare,¹ from a government that is oppressing them.

The Cuban Revolution made three fundamental contributions to the mechanics of revolutionary movements in America:

- (1) The forces of the people can win a war against the army.
- (2) It is not necessary to wait for the fulfillment of all conditions for a revolution because the focus of insurrection can create them.
- (3) The area for the armed struggle in underdeveloped America is the rural regions.

Independent of an analysis to be made later,

When this picture was snapped in the Sierra Maestra mountains of Oriente Province, Fidel Castro was a little known leader of a band of rebels that were in revolt against the government of Fulgencio Batista



we place the foregoing conclusions of the Cuban revolutionary experience at the head of this work as its basic contribution.

War is subject to a definite system of scientific laws. Anyone violating them will meet defeat. Guerrilla warfare is governed by these same laws² but is also subject to special laws that derive from

Our present task is to analyze this type of struggle and the rules to be followed by a people seeking their freedom.

First, it is necessary to determine the combatants in a guerrilla war. On the one side is the center of oppression and its agent—the professional army. On the other side is the population of the nation in question. It is important to point out that guerrilla warfare is a struggle of the people.

The guerrilla force is merely the fighting vanguard of the people and derives its great strength from its roots in the mass of the population. The guerrilla force is not, therefore, to be regarded as numerically inferior to the army it is fighting although it is inferior in firepower. It is necessary to resort to guerrilla warfare when there is support from a majority

¹ There is an important point here: United States Army doctrine in FM 31-21 visualizes guerrilla warfare in support of conventional forces and as part of an over-all campaign. Guevara is visualizing guerrilla activity as a revolutionary action to overthrow an established government. Thus, paragraph 18 of FM 31-21 states: "Guerrilla operations are not ordinarily effective unless coordinated with conventional military operations. The theater commander must have the means to supply the guerrillas with ammunition, and equipment."

² See Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, II, 124: "Guerrilla warfare is a form of struggle of the people in the form of manifestation."

group but only a limited quantity of arms to defend against oppression.

The guerrilla counts, therefore, on the support of the entire population of a locality. This is an indispensable condition. We can see this very clearly if we consider the example of bands of robbers operating in a region. The band has all the characteristics of a guerrilla army: homogeneity, respect for the chief, bravery, knowledge of the terrain and even, in many cases, complete understanding of the tactics to be used. The band lacks only the support of the people. Inevitably, therefore, the robber band is arrested and exterminated.

For the proper analysis of guerrilla warfare, it should be noted that there are two different types: first, the guerrillas supplement the effort of a large regular army as in the case of the Ukrainian guerrillas; second, an armed group is fighting against an established government. We are not interested in the first type. We are interested only in the type where an armed group is carrying on a fight against an established colonial (or other) power. This is a group that has its base in a rural region and is operating in and from that region.

It is important to remember that guerrilla fighting is only a beginning or preparation for conventional warfare. The possibilities for the growth of the guerrilla force and for changing the type of fighting to conventional warfare are as numerous as the possibilities for defeating the enemy in each of the separate battles or skirmishes that take place. For this reason, it is a fundamental principle that there must never be a lost battle or skirmish.

The fundamental tactic is to strike and flee continually so that the enemy gets no rest. Though this appears somewhat negative in character, it is, nevertheless, consistent with the general strategy of guerrilla warfare, which has the same final purpose as any other form of warfare: to annihilate the enemy and to secure victory.

War is a struggle in which both sides attempt to annihilate one another.³ In order to achieve this purpose, they use force, subterfuge, trickery or any other device at their disposal. Military strategy and tactics reveal the aspirations of the military leaders and their methods of achieving objectives. The method always contemplates taking advantage of all the weak points of the enemy.

³ The interesting point here is that Guevara means there are no conventional type military objectives in a guerrilla war: a given hill or town is meaningless as an objective. The objective is always to annihilate whatever force the guerrillas attack. *Ibid.*, 121, uses this same type of thought when Mao says, "All guiding principles for military operations proceed without exception from one basic principle; that is, to strive as far as possible to preserve one's own strength and to annihilate the enemy."

If we compare a war of position with a guerrilla war, we can see that in a war of position the action of each platoon of a large unit corresponds to the action of a guerrilla force. The platoon may commit acts of treachery, will engage in night operations, and will attempt to achieve surprise. If it does not use these methods, it is only because it has not found the watching enemy off guard. However, the guerrilla force is a self-contained unit free to move anywhere, and there are always large areas unguarded by the enemy. Consequently, it is always possible to use the tactics described and to take advantage of surprise. Therefore, it is the duty of the guerrilla to use these tactics.

Guerrilla combat is a phase of warfare that cannot of itself attain complete victory.⁴ It is one of the primary phases of a war of liberation and continues to grow in importance as the guerrilla army acquires the characteristics of a regular army. When the guerrilla army acquires a regular status, then it will be ready for decisive attacks on the enemy and thus secure victory. The triumph will always be the product of the regular army even though the regular army had its origins in a guerrilla force.

Guerrilla Strategy

The first duty of the guerrilla is to keep from being destroyed. Action against the enemy should be constant. A strong base of operations is essential but this may be expanded as the guerrilla force becomes stronger. There finally comes the time to advance against the strongholds of the enemy . . . to defeat him and attain the final objective—victory.

Strategy means the analysis of the objectives to be achieved in light of the total military situation and the courses of action available to achieve those objectives.

For a correct understanding of strategy to be followed by a guerrilla force, it is necessary to make a profound analysis of the courses of action available to the enemy. The guerrilla must analyze the resources available to the enemy, his

⁴ *Ibid.*, 151, says: "Since the war is protracted and ruthless, it becomes possible for guerrilla units to go through the necessary process of steeling and to change gradually into regular armies; consequently, with their mode of operations gradually becoming that of mobile warfare."



strength in men, his mobility, his popular support, his armament, and his leadership. From this analysis, the guerrilla must adapt his own strategy so as to obtain his final objective which is to defeat the enemy army.

There are other fundamental matters to be studied: the enemy's tactics for using his equipment; exact estimates of the value of a tank in a struggle of this kind; the value of a plane; and the kind of arms and equipment possessed by the enemy. It is important to note here that if a guerrilla has a choice, he must always choose the weapons of his enemy because the guerrilla always lacks equipment and arms. Therefore, if he chooses the enemy's weapons the enemy will be the guerrilla's supplier. Once this study is made and the objectives evaluated and analyzed, it is necessary to begin planning for the achievement of the final objective. These plans will be made in advance but will be changed as needed to meet unforeseen circumstances that arise during the fighting.

In the beginning, the primary duty of the guerrilla is to keep himself from being destroyed. It will gradually become easier for guerrilla units to adapt themselves to the new manner of life involved in fleeing from and avoiding the enemy forces sent for their destruction. This objective attained, the guerrillas will find positions whose inaccessibility prevents the enemy from attacking them. Gradually, larger forces will be created and the process of weakening the enemy should begin. The weakening will take place initially in locations nearest the points of active fighting against the guerrilla army. Later, the weakening

can be extended to deeper portions of the enemy territory where his communications and bases of operation can be struck and harassed to the maximum extent of the guerrilla capability.

The striking action should be constant. An enemy soldier in the zone of operations should not be allowed to sleep. The outposts should be systematically attacked and destroyed. At all times the impression should be created that the enemy is completely surrounded. This can be done by the use of patrols. To accomplish this, the complete cooperation of the people is necessary as well as a thorough knowledge of the terrain. These are two essential factors to which the guerrilla must constantly pay attention.

Certain well-organized groups that have shown ability in heretofore less dangerous work may now be used for sabotage duties. This is a terrible weapon which can paralyze entire armies or the industrial life of an entire area. It leaves the inhabitants without industry, light, water, communications, or even the ability to leave their homes except at certain hours. If this be accomplished, the enemy's morale, including that of combat units, will be weakened.

All of this presupposes an enlargement of the area involved in the guerrilla action although there should never be an exaggerated increase of this territory. A strong base of operations⁵ must be maintained at all times, and it must continue to be strengthened during the course of the war.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 134-144, says, ". . . Guerrilla warfare could not be maintained and developed for long without base areas, which are indeed its rear." He then gives a complete discussion of various types of base areas and the problems involved in establishing them.

It is, of course, necessary to take measures to insure the indoctrination of the inhabitants of the base region as well as to take necessary precautions against the implacable foes of the revolution.

When the original guerrilla force has reached suitable strength in men and arms, it should form new guerrilla columns. Ultimately, the territory occupied by the various columns is too small to contain them. The columns advance toward the regions strongly defended by the enemy. Then, the columns unite to form a compact battle front able to engage in a war of position as in the case of a regular army. However, the old guerrilla army must not become separated from its base because the work of forming new guerrilla forces behind the enemy lines must continue. These forces then operate in the same manner as the first until the new territory is overcome.

Thus the moment comes for attacking, for besieging cities, for routing reinforcements, for increasingly daring action by the excited masses in all of the national territory, for the attainment of the final objective—victory.

Guerrilla Tactics

Guerrilla forces are mobile, use surprise, deception and sabotage. Night operations are normal. They have full knowledge of the terrain and peoples in the area of operations. They rearm with captured weapons and ammunition and depend upon captured stores for many essential supplies.

In military terminology, tactics constitute the practical methods of achieving great strategic objectives.

Mobility is a fundamental characteristic of a guerrilla force. In a few minutes it can be far from the immediate scene of action, or in a few hours it can be far from the region of action, if this is necessary. This permits a constantly changing front and thus avoids any form of encirclement. Consistent with the phase of the war a guerrilla force can devote itself exclusively to avoiding encirclement and to prevent being trapped into a decisive, unfavorable battle, or it can conduct counter-encirclement operations. In these a small group of men is presumably surrounded by the enemy when suddenly the enemy finds himself surrounded by a larger contingent. The first men, situated in an impregnable position, were merely to be surrounded or annihilated in some manner.

A characteristic of this war of mobility is what is called "minuet," by analogy with the dance of the same name. For example, the guerrillas surround an enemy column with small groups of five or six men in several locations (situated so they will not in turn be surrounded). Then fighting is initiated at one of these points, and the enemy advances towards the attacking force. The guerrillas retreat, keeping contact with the enemy. Now, another group initiates an attack. The enemy will move to the new point and the guerrillas repeat their former action. With such successive operations an enemy column can be immobilized without great danger. The enemy is forced to use large quantities of equipment, and the morale of his troops is weakened.

This same procedure can be used at night, with greater aggressiveness because it is much more difficult to surround the guerrillas. We can say that night fighting is another characteristic of guerrilla forces. It permits them to advance and to maneuver in territory that is not well known and thus avoid betrayal by informers. The numerical inferiority of a guerrilla force requires that attacks take place by surprise. This is the great advantage that enables guerrillas to inflict casualties on the enemy, without loss to themselves.

A guerrilla soldier killed in action should never be left with his arms and equipment. It is the duty of every guerrilla soldier to recover at once the precious weapons and equipment of a fallen comrade. The manner of using weapons is another characteristic of guerrilla warfare. In any combat between a regular force and guerrillas, each side can be identified by the nature of its fire. The regular army fires heavy concentrations, but the guerrillas fire separate, accurate bursts.

Another fundamental characteristic of the guerrilla soldier is his ability to adapt himself to any conditions or to turn changing battlefield situations to his advantage. In contrast to the rigid methods of classical warfare, the guerrilla invents his own tactics for each moment of the fight and constantly surprises the enemy.

Primarily, there are three kinds of defensive positions: elastic positions, special positions which the enemy cannot pass, and positions suitable for diversionary actions. Instances are frequent where the enemy observes with surprise that a gradual, easy advance is suddenly and forcefully stopped, with no possibility of going farther. This is because the positions held by the guerrillas, when it has been possible to make a complete study of the terrain, are impregnable. It is not necessary to count how many soldiers may attack but how many can defend a position.

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A position can be defended against a battalion almost always, if

not always. The great task of the leader is to make the proper choice of the time and location for defending a position to the end.

The manner of attack of a guerrilla army is also different: it begins with surprise—furious, implacable—and suddenly the assault is completely stopped. The surviving enemy force believes the attackers have gone, becomes calm again and resumes normal activities within the position or besieged city. Suddenly the same kind of attack breaks out in another place. As another example, a post defending a sector is suddenly attacked, overcome, and falls to the guerrillas. The basic features are surprise and rapidity of attack.

Sabotage is always an effective weapon when well handled. Sabotage should never be used against unimportant means of production so that it needlessly paralyzes an unessential sector of the population and leaves people without work. Sabotage against a soft-drink factory is ridiculous, whereas sabotage against a central electric plant is absolutely correct and commendable. In the first instance a few workers are affected and there is no effect on general industrial activity. In the second, workers are also affected but this is entirely justified by the total paralysis of the life of the region.

Aviation is one of the favorite weapons of the regular army. However, this weapon cannot be used effectively in the first stages of guerrilla warfare, for there are only small, hidden groups of men scattered in rough terrain.⁶ The effectiveness of the air weapon depends upon systematic destruction of organized and visible positions of defense. For these conditions to exist, there must be large concentrations of men in the defenses, but this is not true of guerrilla positions. Aviation can, nevertheless, be effective against marching columns in level or unprotected terrain. This danger, however, is easily avoided by night marches.

One of the enemy's weakest points is his highway and rail transport. It is practically impossible to guard every part of a road or railway. Therefore, traffic can be stopped by explosives placed at any unguarded point. Explosions can be caused when a vehicle is passing not only to make the vehicle unusable, but also to cause considerable loss of enemy lives and materiel.

There are various sources for explosives: they can be brought from other regions; they can be obtained from unexploded bombs or shells of the enemy; or they can be made in secret laboratories within the guerrilla area. There are many ways

⁶ *Ibid.*, 127 says: "It is precisely because they are weak and small that they can appear and disappear mysteriously in the enemy's rear and completely baffle him—such great freedom of action is something that massive regular armies can never enjoy."



of using explosives; the manufacture of bombs and other devices depends upon the resources of the guerrilla forces.

The practice of concealing guerrilla groups along roads to explode mines and annihilate survivors is most remunerative against equipment and weapons. The surprised enemy does not use his ammunition and does not have time to escape. Thus, the guerrillas obtain considerable results at little cost.

As these blows are struck the enemy will change his tactics and instead of sending out vehicles separately will use motorized columns. Nevertheless, it is possible by proper choice of location to achieve the same results by breaking up the column and concentrating forces on one vehicle. In these instances it is always necessary to observe the essential features of guerrilla tactics, which are:

- (1) Absolute knowledge of the terrain;
- (2) Safeguarding escape routes;
- (3) Knowledge and vigilance as to all secondary roads leading to the place of attack;
- (4) Knowledge of the populace of the area and its total capabilities as to supplies and transport;
- (5) Temporary concealment or permanent concealment when it is necessary to leave wounded comrades;
- (6) Numerical superiority at a particular point of the action;
- (7) Complete mobility; and possibility of counting on reserve forces.

If all these tactical requirements are fulfilled,

surprise actions against the enemy's lines of communication can yield high dividends.

A fundamental part of guerrilla tactics is the manner of treating inhabitants of the region. The treatment of the enemy is also important. Toward the enemy the rule to follow should be one of absolute ruthlessness at the time of attack, absolute implacability toward all contemptible persons engaging in betrayals and assassinations; but the greatest possible clemency toward soldiers who in fighting are fulfilling, or believe they are fulfilling, their military duty. It is a good rule, so long as there are no important bases of operations or impregnable positions, not to take prisoners. Survivors should be left at liberty; wounded enemy should be given all care possible at the time of the action. Conduct toward the civilian populace should be governed by great respect for their traditions and customs, in order to demonstrate effectively the moral superiority of the guerrilla soldiers over their opponents. Except in special circumstances, there should be no executions without giving the accused person an opportunity to clear himself of the charges.

Favorable Terrain

The rougher and more inaccessible the terrain the more confident the guerrilla is. From almost impenetrable refuge he goes out constantly to harass and fight the enemy. The radius of operations depends upon the situation but safe lines of internal communication must be maintained.

Guerrilla warfare will not always be waged in terrain favorable for the application of its tactics. However, when the guerrilla force is established in regions difficult of access, in wild and rough country, with steep mountains, or impassable deserts or marshes, the terrain is favorable. The general tactics will always tend to be the same and based on the fundamental postulates of guerrilla warfare.⁷

The guerrilla force should fight from the first moment it has assured its survival. It must go out constantly from its place of refuge to fight. Its mobility does not have to be so great as when the terrain is unfavorable. It must adapt itself to

⁷ FM 31-21, 14, states: "The most secure terrain sometimes cannot be used as the base area because guerrilla forces should be within striking distance of profitable targets." The difference in thought stems from the U. S. concept of using guerrillas in support of conventional forces, whereas Guerrilla¹ is interested in revolution.

the circumstances of the enemy but does not need to have the extensive mobility required in regions where the enemy can quickly concentrate large numbers of men. Nor are night operations so important in this kind of fighting, because operations and especially movement of forces often are possible by day, always subject to the enemy's vigilance on the ground and in the air. Also, the actions can last much longer in the mountains with smaller forces used, and very probably the enemy can be prevented from bringing reinforcements to the scene of the fighting. Vigilance over possible routes of access is, of course, an axiom that must never be forgotten by the guerrilla, but his aggressiveness (because of the difficulties of preventing the enemy from receiving reinforcements) can be even greater. It is possible to come closer to the enemy, to harass and fight him more directly and for a longer time, always subject to circumstances such as, for example, the quantity of equipment available.

Warfare in favorable terrain, and particularly in the mountains, in opposition to so many advantages, includes the disadvantage that it is difficult, because of the considerable precautions taken by the enemy in these regions, to seize in a single operation a considerable quantity of arms and equipment. (The guerrilla soldier must never forget that the enemy should be the source of supply for arms and equipment.) However, much more rapidly than in unfavorable terrain, the guerrilla force can become firmly established and form a center for carrying on a war of positions. It forms installations protected from aviation or long-range artillery, creates necessary small industries and activities such as hospitals, education and training centers and other essentials like warehouses and radio broadcasting stations.

The radius of operations of a guerrilla force of this type can be as wide as the conditions or operations of adjacent guerrilla forces permit. Everything depends upon the time required to proceed from a place of operations to a place of safety. This means assuming and calculating that marches will be made at night, that it is not possible to operate farther than five or six hours' march from the point of minimum safety. Of course, small guerrilla bands can radiate from the areas of safety weakening the territory.

Weapons preferred for this type of warfare are those of long range with little expenditure of ammunitions, with support from automatic and semiautomatic weapons. One of the weapons most recommended is the Garand M1 rifle, although it must be used by people with some experience, because it uses too much ammunition. Semi-heavy weapons such as machine guns mounted on tripods can be used in favorable terrain with a greater margin of safety for the weapons and



their users, but they should always be used as defensive weapons and not for attack.

An ideal armament for a guerrilla force of 25 men would be 10 to 15 ordinary manually operated rifles, some 10 automatic weapons divided between Garand rifles and small portable machine guns, counting on the support of automatic weapons that are light and easily transported such as U. S. Browning machine guns and the more modern Belgian FAL and M14. Among the small portable machine guns, those of 9mm are preferable, as greater quantities of ammunition can be carried and their more simple construction the better facilitates changing replacement parts. All of this should be adapted to the armament of the enemy because we are going to use enemy equipment when it falls into our hands. The enemy will find that heavy armament is practically useless: the aviation can see nothing and serves no purpose, and tanks and artillery can accomplish little due to difficulty of advancing in these regions.

Supply is very important. In general, regions that are difficult of access have for that very reason a difficult supply problem because farmers, and therefore supplies of farm products, are lacking. It is necessary to have stable supply lines and a minimum of goods always on hand to provide against any unfavorable contingency.

In such areas of operations, possibilities for sabotage on a large scale are lacking because there are few constructions, few telephone lines, aqueducts or other facilities that can be damaged by direct action.

To assure supplies, it is important to have ani-

men and animals that are best. Adequate pastures must be available for feeding them. These animals can travel over extremely rough and difficult ground where other animals cannot. In the most difficult conditions, resort must be had to transport by men. A man can carry a load of 25 kilograms [say 55 pounds] for many hours a day and for many days.

Lines of communication with the exterior must have a number of intermediate points in the hands of persons who can be trusted. Here products can be stored and persons acting as intermediaries can be concealed at certain times. In addition, internal lines of communication must be established, depending on the degree of development reached by the guerrilla force. In some areas of operations during the last Cuban war, telephone lines many kilometers long were provided and roads were built. There was always an adequate messenger service to cover all areas in the shortest time possible.

Unfavorable Terrain

In heavily populated and built-up areas, guerrilla groups must be kept small. Night movement is SOP. Stealth, secrecy and surprise are commonplace. Security is difficult and guerrillas use propaganda to sway the masses to their side of the conflict.

Unfavorable regions are those without woods or other cover, that are not very rough, and have many roads or other means of communication. To wage war in this type of terrain all the fundamental features of guerrilla warfare are used. However, the manner of using them is changed. There is a change, we can say, in the quantity but not in the quality of these features. For example, mobility of guerrillas in such terrain should be exceptional; attacks should preferably take place at night and should be extremely rapid, almost explosive; withdrawals should be not only rapid but should be toward points different from the original location, as far as possible from the action. Always remember that it is not possible to find a protected place inaccessible to the repressive forces.

Men can march between 30 and 50 kilometers [say 18 to 30 miles] during the hours of night and into the early hours of daylight. However, the area of operation cannot be completely controlled, and there is danger that the inhabitants will see and hear the guerrillas pass and will report to the persecuting army. It is always prefer-

able in such cases to act at night, although this rule will not always hold true, as there will be times when the hours of dawn will be better. The enemy should never be allowed to become accustomed to certain ways of fighting: the places, the time, and the manner of carrying out operations should be varied constantly.

Explosions of mines in roads and the destruction of bridges are very important methods to be taken into account. There can be less aggressiveness with regard to continuing attacks, but while they are occurring they can be very violent. Other weapons such as mines and shotguns can be used. The shotgun is a terrifying weapon for use against the usually uncovered vehicles carrying troops and also against unprotected vehicles (buses and similar vehicles).

The number of men in a guerrilla group of this kind should not be greater than 10 or 15. It is of great importance to consider always the limitations with respect to the number in a single combat group. Ten, 12 or 15 men can be concealed in some location and at the same time offer strong resistance to the enemy and support one another. On the other hand, four or five would be perhaps too few. However, if the number exceeds 10, the possibilities are much greater that the enemy may localize them in their original camp or on some march.

It should be remembered that the rate of marching of a guerrilla force is equal to the rate of its slowest man. It is more difficult to find uniformity of marching rate among 20, 30 or 40 men, than among 10. Also, the guerrilla of the plains should be a good runner. It is in the plains that the practice of striking and fleeing should be used to the maximum. Guerrillas of the plains have the great disadvantage that they can be rapidly surrounded and have no safe place where they can put up a firm resistance. For these reasons they must live for long periods under conditions of absolute secrecy, because they can trust only those whose loyalty has been completely proved. Repressions by the enemy are generally violent and brutal, reaching not only heads of families but also women and children. In many instances, pressure over persons that are not very strong-willed can cause them to give information as to the location of guerrilla forces and how they are operating, permitting immediate encirclement with consequences that are always disagreeable, if not mortal.

One of the weapons that can be used by a guerrilla force—a weapon of heavy type that is of great value because of easy handling and transport—is the bazooka (the antitank grenade for rifles can replace it). It will of course be taken from the enemy. It is ideal for firing on either armored or unarmored vehicles.

and for quickly overcoming small posts with reduced effort. However, only three shells can be carried by each man.

Naturally, none of the heavy weapons taken from the enemy must be wasted. However, there are weapons, such as the tripod-mounted machine guns and heavy machine guns of caliber .50, which, if taken, can be used temporarily with the thought of abandoning them eventually. There should be no combat, under the unfavorable conditions we are describing, to defend a heavy machine gun or some other weapon of this type. The weapon should be used only until the tactical moment arrives when it is advisable to abandon it. In our war of liberation, abandoning a weapon constituted a serious crime for which no excuse was permitted other than the one just pointed out; we specified this as the only situation that would not bring punishment. The ideal weapon for the guerrilla in unfavorable terrain is the rapid-fire personal weapon.

The very characteristics of easy access usually make the region populous, and the area usually includes a farming population. This greatly facilitates the problem of supply. By dealing with people who can be trusted, among those who make contact with establishments distributing provisions to the inhabitants, it is quite possible to maintain a guerrilla force without devoting time or much money to long and dangerous lines of supply. It should be emphasized, in this connection, that the smaller the number of men the easier it will be to supply them. Essential supplies such as hammocks, blankets, waterproof cloth, mosquito netting, shoes, medicines, and food are found directly in the region. They are objects of daily use by the inhabitants.

Communications will be greatly facilitated by being able to count on a greater number of men and many more ways of transmission. However, there will be much more difficulty as regards insuring that a message will reach a distant point, because trust must be placed in a number of persons. Thus, there will be danger of the eventual capture of one of the messengers constantly crossing enemy territory. If the messages are not very important they may be transmitted orally; if they are important they should be transmitted in writing and in code, because experience shows that oral transmission from person to person can completely distort any message sent in this way.

For the reasons pointed out, in addition to being more difficult, industrial activities by guerrillas become less important. It will not be possible to make shoe soles or weapons. Activities of this kind will practically be limited to small well-concealed workshops for reloading cartridges, making some types of mines and detonating de-



ment. On the other hand, it is possible to count on all the workshops of friendly inhabitants for the kinds of work that are necessary.

This brings us to two logical conclusions arising from what has been said. One is that conditions for guerrilla warfare are the reverse of those that favor the productive development of the region in question. All the favorable circumstances for production, all of the facilities to make human life easier, are unfavorable for the guerrilla forces; the more facilities there are for the life of the inhabitants, the more uncertain, the more difficult and nomadic will be the life of the guerrilla. The title of this section is indeed "Warfare in Unfavorable Terrain" because all that is favorable to human life, with accompanying means of communication, urban or semi-urban centers, large concentrations of people, and ground easily worked by machinery places the guerrilla at a disadvantage.

The second conclusion is that, if guerrilla activities must necessarily include important work among the masses, this work is much more important in unfavorable regions, in regions where a single enemy attack can result in catastrophe. In such regions there must be continual work in propaganda, continual effort to unite the workers, the peasants, and other social classes in the region, in order to arrive at a complete homogeneity of the internal front in favor of the guerrilla forces. This work among the people, this continual activity as regards relations between the guerrilla force

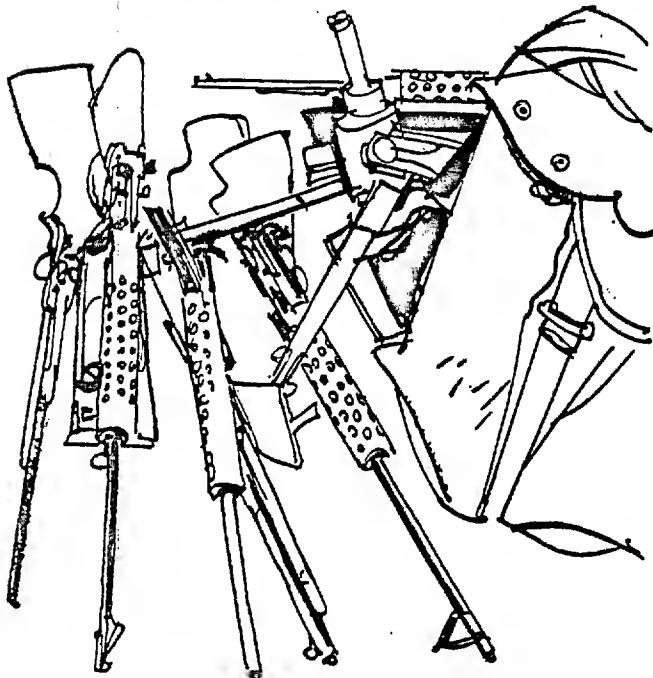
must also take into account individual cases of recalcitrant enemies and eliminate such enemies without leniency when they constitute a danger. In such matters, guerrillas must be ruthless. There can be no enemies in dangerous places within the area of operations.

Suburban Areas

Guerrilla forces in suburban areas must not operate independently of other forces in the conflict but must gear their operations to the objectives and plans of other forces in other areas. Forces must be small, must be trained in sabotage, and must maintain extremely severe discipline.

When the guerrilla fight can be directed at harassing cities, and guerrilla forces are able to penetrate and establish themselves with a certain degree of security in the surrounding countryside, it will be necessary to give these forces special instruction or, we should say, organization.

It must be pointed out that a suburban guerrilla force cannot be formed by its own efforts. It can be formed only after the creation of certain conditions necessary for its existence. This indicates that a suburban guerrilla force will be di-



rectly under the orders of leaders located in other areas. Therefore, such a force does not carry out independent actions, except in accordance with previously established strategic plans. The action must support activities of larger groups located in another area. This is a smaller scale of operations than used by other types of guerrilla forces but it will definitely contribute to the success of some particular tactical objectives. A suburban guerrilla force will not be able to choose between sabotage of telephone services, or other forms of sabotage, or surprising a patrol of soldiers on a distant road—it will do exactly what it is told to do. If it is called upon to cut or damage telephone lines, electric power cables, sewers, railways, or aqueducts, it will confine itself to the performance of these duties to the best of its ability.

The numerical strength of such a force should not exceed four or five men. Limitation to this number is important because the suburban guerrilla force must be regarded as acting in an area that is exceptionally unfavorable; the vigilance of the enemy is much greater and the possibilities of reprisals and of betrayals increase enormously. A suburban guerrilla force is at a disadvantage because it is unable to withdraw very far from the scene of operations. Nevertheless some withdrawal, to remain completely concealed during the day, should be combined with rapidity of movement and action. Such a force is especially suited for night actions without changing its manner of operating until the insurrection has progressed to the point of besieging the city and the inhabitants can participate as active combatants.

Essential qualities of guerrillas of this type are discipline, personal courage, and

the case of other guerrillas—and discretion. They cannot count on more than two or three friendly houses for shelter and food. It is almost certain that seizure under these conditions means death. Their weapons will not be the same as those of other guerrillas, and will consist of weapons for personal defense that do not prevent rapid flight and safe concealment. The best weapons are a carbine, one or two sawed-off shotguns and pistols for the other members of the group.

Armed attacks should never be made except by surprise on one or two members of the enemy troops or of the enemy's secret service. The action must be concentrated on the sabotage ordered.

Ample supplies of equipment and tools should be provided for the work. There should be appropriate saws, large quantities of dynamite, picks and spades, and apparatus for tearing up railway lines. In short, adequate mechanical equipment is necessary for all that is to be done. The equipment should be concealed in safe places which can be easily reached by those who will use it.

If there is more than one guerrilla force, they will be under the command of a single leader who will give orders for the necessary work through trusted persons engaged in civil occupations. In certain instances, the guerrillas can continue their peaceful occupations. This is usually very difficult because the suburban guerrilla force is a group of men performing unlawful acts and operating under the extremely unfavorable conditions described.

There has been lack of appreciation of the value of guerrilla fighting in the suburbs, but it is, in fact, very important. Appropriate operations of this kind, extended over a wide area, can almost completely paralyze the commercial and industrial life of the area and cause disturbance and distress to the entire population. This makes the people anxious for violent developments to bring an end to their troubles. If thought is given at the beginning of the war to future possibilities, specialists can be organized for suburban fighting. Then action can be carried out much more rapidly and with a saving for the nation in lives and precious time.

Continued next month with

Bush Warfare

The Guerrilla as a Fighter
The Organization for Bush Warfare
Bush Combat

La Guerra de Guerrillas

Continuing our condensation of Che Guevara's book on the lessons learned by Castro's rebel forces

Chapter II. Bush Warfare

The Guerrilla as a Fighter

Idealistic, implacable, nocturnal and preferably a native of the area, the guerrilla fighter must make maximum use of surprise, weapons, terrain and his physical stamina to combat and conquer conventional forces.

The first question which arises is, "What should the guerrilla fighter be like?" One must reply that preferably the guerrilla fighter should be an inhabitant of the area. There he has friends to whom he can turn for help. He will know the area because it is his. This personal knowledge of the terrain is an important factor in guerrilla warfare.

The guerrilla is a nocturnal fighter. This means he must have all the attributes required for night operations. He must be cunning; he must march to the battlefield over hills and dales so that no one becomes aware of his presence; and having the benefit of the factor of surprise he must fall upon the enemy. He must immediately exploit the panic which all surprises cause and throw himself violently

into the struggle. He must allow no weakness on the part of his companions, and he must immediately correct any indication of weakness should it arise. He must fall upon the enemy like a typhoon, destroying everything, giving no quarter and expecting none if the tactical circumstances make this necessary. He must mete out justice to those who are to be tried and sow panic among the enemy. However, at the same time, he must treat benevolently the defenseless vanquished and also respect those that die.

A wounded soldier must be given medical treatment and must be given the best possible help unless his earlier life makes him subject to punishment by the death penalty. In this case, he



Never impatient, successful guerrillas await opportunity. An off day in Oriente province gave Fidel Castro a chance to catch up on his reading, possibly the justly celebrated exegesis on guerrilla warfare by Mao Tse-tung

April 1961

will be treated in accordance with his past. One must never take a prisoner unless he can be brought to a solid base of operations impregnable to the enemy. Unless he is a well-known criminal, a prisoner is to be set free after he has been interrogated.

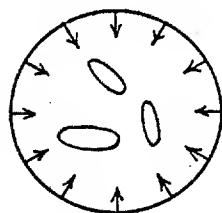
The guerrilla fighter must be ready to risk his life as often as necessary or to give it without the slightest hesitation at the required moment. But, at the same time, he must be cautious and never expose himself unnecessarily. All necessary precautions must be taken to prevent an adverse conclusion of any operation or battle. That is why it is so very important that, in any battle, total vigilance be exercised over areas from which enemy reinforcements can arrive, and also to prevent a siege. The consequences of a siege¹ are grave not only with respect to the physical disaster they can cause, but also with respect to the moral disaster which may bring a loss of faith in the outcome of the struggle.

Without reservation, there must be audacity. The dangers and the possibilities of an action must be correctly analyzed. There must always be readiness to take an optimistic attitude towards circumstances and to seek a favorable decision even when an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages may not warrant it.

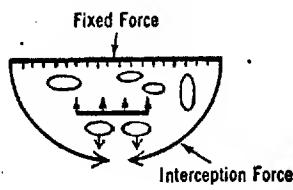
If the guerrilla is to survive amid the conditions of the struggle and the actions of the enemy,

¹ Throughout this work the fear of a "siege" is apparent. Actually, Guevara means encirclement. Mao also acknowledges that the encirclement is the thing to be most feared. German experience in Russia also indicated that the only really effective way of stamping out guerrilla activity was by encircling the affected area and completely exterminating the guerrilla band. For a description of German methods and the directive they issued to combat guerrilla groups see Dixon, *Communist Guerrilla Warfare* (Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1954), 201-223. In capsule form, the German concept is given below. The Germans designated a guerrilla area as a "cauldron" and gave these four basic methods for destroying a cauldron by encirclement:

The Spider's Web



The Partridge Drive



Splitting the Cauldron



Shock Unit Action



he must have a quality of adaptability which will permit him to identify himself with the environment in which he lives. He must adapt himself to it as his ally and exploit it as much as possible. At the same time, he must have a quick imagination and instantaneous resourcefulness which will permit him to change the course of events by using a decisive course of action.

A guerrilla must never leave a wounded companion to the mercy of any enemy because it is virtually certain that his fate will be death. Regardless of the difficulty, he must evacuate the wounded from the combat zone to a safe place.

At the same time, he must be tight-lipped. Everything that is said or is heard in his presence must always be strictly reserved to his own knowledge, and he must never permit himself to utter one single word too many. This must even be the case among his own fellow fighters: obviously, the enemy will try to infiltrate agents into the guerrilla force in order to learn the plans, places, and means of existence available to and utilized by the guerrillas.

In addition to the moral qualities we have stressed, the guerrilla must possess some very important physical qualities. The guerrilla fighter must be untiring. There will be times when he will have to go to a still more distant place when his exhaustion appears intolerable. He must always have a radiating face and manifest the deepest of convictions. This will allow him to take still another step, still do his utmost, and follow it up with another, and another, and another until he arrives at the place designated by his leaders.

He must be long-suffering to the most extreme degree in order to overcome the privations of hunger, thirst, and lack of clothing and shelter to which he is exposed at all times. He must also be able to withstand illnesses and wounds which many times will have to be cured without major medical care. His only doctor may be Nature's healing action. It must be this way, because the fighter who leaves the battle zone in order to seek medical help for some illness or wound is, in most cases, executed by the enemy.

Persons with such notable characteristics of devotion and firmness must have an ideal which permits them to be effective under the adverse conditions we have described. Such an ideal must be simple, not complex, without great pretension, and in general need not be profound. But it must be so firm and clear that without the slightest hesitation a man will give his life for the ideal. Among nearly all farmers such an ideal is the right to have a piece of land for himself in order that he may work it and enjoy the fruits of just social treatment. Among the workers such an ideal is to have work, to be paid an adequate wage, and also to receive just social treatment.

Among students and professionals, more abstract ideals are found such as those of freedom, for which they fight.

All this leads us to ask how a guerrilla fighter lives. His normal pattern of life is the hike. Let us use as example a guerrilla fighter in the mountains situated in wooded regions, who lives under constant harassment by the enemy. Under such conditions, in order to change position, a guerrilla moves without stopping to eat during daylight. When darkness has fallen, an encampment is established in some clearing near some water course. Each group eats together and campfires are made from materials at hand.

The guerrilla fighter eats when he can, and all that he can. Sometimes fabulous amounts of rations disappear in the gullets of the fighters, while at others two or three days of fasting occur.

Under the conditions described, encampments must be easily movable, and no traces left which will give them away. Vigilance must be extreme: for every 10 men that sleep, one or two must be on watch. Sentinels must be continually relieved and all entrances to the encampment must always be under observation.

Within the pattern of the life of the fighter, combat is the most interesting event. It brings to all the greatest joy and makes them march with renewed spirit. Combat, the climax of the guerrilla's life, takes place at suitable moments when some enemy encampment has been found, investigated, and determined to be so weak that it can be annihilated. Alternatively, an enemy column may advance into the territory immediately occupied by the liberating forces. The two cases are different.

Against an encampment, action will be widespread and will fundamentally attempt to defeat the members of the column that come to break the siege, inasmuch as an entrenched enemy is never the favorite prey of the guerrilla. The ideal prey is the enemy in movement—nervous, lacking knowledge of the terrain, fearing everything, without natural protection for self-defense. An unfavorable condition exists when the enemy is entrenched and has powerful arms to repel attack. However, this is never the situation when a large column is suddenly attacked in two or three places and fragmented. Then the attackers can withdraw before any reaction can take place, because they cannot surround and completely destroy the enemy columns.

If it is not possible to rout the enemy through hunger or thirst or through a direct attack of those who are entrenched in the encampment, then the siege should be lifted after it has inflicted its destructive impact on the invading column. In cases where the guerrilla force is too weak and the invading column is strong, the



tion might be centered upon the advance guard. There are some who have a special predilection for this operation, whatever other result they may wish to achieve, and time after time they attack the same advance position. The enemy soldiers then come to the realization that those in the front places almost invariably are killed, and they refuse to occupy the advance positions. Thus, real mutinies are provoked. The advance guard must always be hit again, even though other points of the column might also be attacked.²

The degree of ease with which the guerrilla fighter can accomplish his mission and adapt himself to his environment depends upon his equipment. The guerrilla fighter has individual characteristics, even though he is attached to the small units that form his group of action. He must keep in his knapsack, in addition to his usual equipment, all the necessaries which will enable him to remain alone for some time.

In giving the list of equipment, we refer essentially to that which a fighter can carry in the situations existing at the beginning of the war, in difficult terrain, during frequent rains, in relative cold, and when being pursued by the enemy. In other words, we refer to the situation that existed at the beginning of the Cuban War of Liberation.

The equipment of a guerrilla fighter is divided into essentials and accessories. Among the first is the hammock which allows him to rest adequately. He will always be able to find two trees from which he can suspend it. In case he should

² This is a favorite tactic evidently devised by Guevara himself. It is mentioned repeatedly and is an excellent example of the unusual and unusual sort.

have to sleep on the ground, the hammock can serve as a mattress. In case there is rain or when the soil is wet—a frequent event in the tropical mountain zone—the hammock is indispensable in order to be able to sleep if a piece of nylon waterproof cloth is used with it. Nylon can be stretched to form a roof to cover the hammock: a string is attached at each of the four corners, the middle resting on another length of string. The last string serves to divide the waters, and thus a small campaign tent is formed.

A blanket is indispensable because during the night it gets very cold in the mountains. It is also necessary to carry some cover which permits one to face the great changes in temperature. Dress consists of work shirt and work trousers, be they uniform or not. The shoes must be of best possible construction, and one of the most important articles of which one should have a reserve are shoes: without them marching is very difficult.

Inasmuch as the guerrilla fighter carries his movable house in his knapsack, his knapsack is also very important. Primitive ones can be made from any bag to which are attached rope handles; but better ones are made of leather and can be purchased or can be made by some leather worker.

The guerrilla fighter should always carry some personal food supply in reserve, in addition to that issued to the troops or eaten during rest stops.

The following are indispensable: butter or oil are the most important because they furnish the fats required by the body; canned goods that must not be consumed except in circumstances when it is not materially possible to obtain food for cooking, unless there are so many cans their weight hinders the march; canned fish, of great nutritive value; condensed milk, an excellent food because of the quantity of sugar it contains and for the taste which gives it the character of a treat; powdered milk, which is always useful; sugar is another important part of the equipment; so is salt, which makes hardship more bearable. Also useful are seasonings for food. The most common are onions and garlic, though there are others which vary according to the characteristics of the country.

To care for his rifle, the guerrilla needs special greases which must be very carefully applied—sewing machine oil is quite good if special grease is not available. Scraps and bits of cloth will be useful in caring for weapons as well as a little pail in which he can clean them, for this must be done quite often. The cartridge belt should be of standard manufacture, or else home-made according to the circumstances; but it must be sufficiently good so that not a single round is lost. Bullets are the basis of the struggle.

be guarded like gold for without them all else is in vain.

The guerrilla must carry a canteen or a water flask because he must drink in quantity and it is not always possible to find water when it is needed. He must carry general purpose medicines such as penicillin or other antibiotics, drugs such as aspirin to treat fever and those for the endemic illnesses of the locality. These might be tablets against malaria, sulfa drugs against diarrhea, antiparasite agents of various kinds—in other words, the medical supply must be adjusted to the characteristics of the area. All drugs should be well packed and of the oral type whenever possible. In places where there are poisonous animals it is well to carry the antidote serum. The rest of the medical equipment must be surgical. In addition, there might be small individual supplies of drugs for treating minor ailments.

Very important in the life of a fighter are cigars, cigarettes, or pipe tobacco, for the smoke that can be enjoyed during moments of rest is a great boon to the solitary soldier. A pipe is best, for it allows the fullest use, in times of shortages, of the tobacco of cigarettes and cigar butts. Matches are important not only in order to light cigarettes but also to light fires. Fires are one of the greatest needs of life in the mountains during rains. It is preferable to carry both matches and a lighter so that if one fails the other can be used.

It is convenient to carry soap, not only for personal cleanliness but also to clean eating utensils. Intestinal disorders are frequently caused by spoiled food which is mixed with new food in a dirty utensil. With all the described equipment, a guerrilla fighter can feel secure enough to survive in the mountains under any adverse condition for the time necessary to master the situation.

There are accessories which at times are useful and at other times constitute a hindrance but which, in general, are very useful. The compass is one. In any given zone, the compass is used mostly as a complement to orientation because increasing familiarity with the terrain makes that instrument unnecessary. Furthermore, the compass is very difficult to use in mountainous terrain because the route it indicates frequently is not the ideal one to move from one place to another. The straight route is likely to be interrupted by insurmountable obstacles. Also useful is an extra piece of nylon cloth in order to cover equipment during a rain. It must be stressed that in tropical countries rain is very constant during certain months and that water is the enemy of the warrior's equipment, his food, his weapons, his medicines, his papers, or his garments. A change of clothing may be carried, but usually this is something new recruits already have. Usually

and other articles such as towels omitted. The life of a guerrilla fighter teaches safeguarding energy to carry the knapsack from one place to another and rejects everything which is not essential.

The prerequisites of cleanliness are a piece of soap which will serve for washing of belongings as well as for personal cleanliness, and tooth brush and paste. It is also advisable to carry some books which can be exchanged among other members of the force. The books should be good biographies of heroes of the past, histories or economic geographies (preferably about the country), and some general works which will tend to raise the cultural level of the soldiers. These lessen the tendency to card games and other forms of distraction which sometimes loom too large in the life of the guerrilla fighter.

Whenever there is extra space in the knapsack, it should be filled with articles of food, except in areas which offer very advantageous conditions for food supply. Candy or foods of lesser importance might be carried to augment the basic diet. Hard biscuits might be among these, but they occupy much space and they easily crumble. In the mountains, it is useful to carry a machete. In more humid places, it is useful to have a small bottle of gasoline or to obtain some resinous ma-

A guerrilla who carries all these articles will have a solid house on his shoulders—a considerable weight, but adequate to make his life more comfortable amid the hard work of the campaign.

Organization for Bush Warfare

Flexibility is foremost in the guerrilla leader's mind. Just as the conventional forces commander must be ready to change his tactics—so must the unconventional leader be prepared to reverse his field to stay with the situation.

The organization of a bush war cannot be described as following a rigid scheme.³ There are innumerable differences resulting from adaptation to the environment to which the principles apply. For reasons of exposition, we shall assume that our experience has universal value. However, we must stress that as we explain it, there always exists the possibility that new ways of doing things can be found which are more suited to the characteristics of the particular armed group.

The number of units in a guerrilla force is one of the most difficult problems to define. There are different numbers of men, different organizations of troops, as we have experienced. We shall suppose a force located in favorable, mountainous territory under conditions that are not so bad as to force them to move continually, but not so good as to enable them to have a permanent base of operations. An armed nucleus located in such a setting should not have as its tactical unit more than 150 men. It may even be that this number is too many and the ideal might be 100 men. This constitutes a column, and it is commanded, following the Cuban military hierarchy, by a major (*comandante*). It may be well to repeat that in our war we abolished the ranks of corporal and sergeant because we considered these to be representatives of tyranny.⁴

Basing ourselves on these premises, a major commands a force of 100 to 150 men and has as many captains under him as there are groups of 30 to 40 men. The captain leads and organizes his platoon so that it fights almost always as a unit, and he is in charge of the distribution of supplies and the general organization of the units. In guerrilla warfare, the squad is the functional



terial from pine trees which will permit quick starting of a fire even though the wood is wet.

Among the usual equipment of the guerrilla fighter must be a pencil and notebook to enable him to make notes, to write letters to the outside, or to communicate with other guerrillas. He should

³ Mao, *op. cit.*, 154: "The principle of command in guerrilla war is opposed both to absolute centralization and to absolute decentralization; it demands a centralized command in strategy and a decentralized command in campaigns and battles."

⁴ Some readers may recall that Batista was a first sergeant in the Cuban Army before he seized power.

unit. Each squad has approximately eight to 12 men and is commanded by a lieutenant who has duties analogous to those of a captain for his group, but who is always subordinated to his captain.

The operational reality of guerrilla warfare, which is waged in small groups, makes the squad the real unit. Eight to 10 men are the most that can act together in a fight under such conditions. Therefore the lesser groups must execute the orders of their immediate chief often while separated from the captain although active on the same front. One thing that must never be done is to fragment the unit and to maintain it as such at times when there is no fight. For every squad and platoon, the immediate successor must have been named in case the chief is killed; the successor must be sufficiently trained to be able to take immediate charge of his new responsibility.

One of the fundamental problems of this troop concerns food: lowest-ranking men must receive the same treatment as the chief. This is of prime importance not only with respect to chronic mal-nutrition, but also because the distribution of food is the only regular daily occurrence. The troop is very sensitive to justice and measures all rations in a critical spirit. Never, therefore, must the least degree of favoritism influence anything. If for any reason the food is distributed among the entire column, some order must be established and must be strictly respected. At the same time the quantity and quality of food allocated to every person must be specified.

In the distribution of clothing, the problem is different because here are articles of individual use. Two criteria must be considered. First, the claimant's need. Second, the system of seniority and merit. This is difficult to define and must be set down in special charts by someone entrusted with them and approved by the chief of the column. The same procedure must be followed with all other articles which may arrive and which are not for collective use.

Tobacco and cigarettes must be distributed according to the general rule of equal treatment for everyone.

The task of distribution must be handled by persons who are especially entrusted with it. It is advisable that these be part of headquarters. Indeed, headquarters has very important administrative tasks of coordination, and other tasks should normally be given to it. The most intelligent officers should be part of headquarters, and its soldiers should be diligent and imbued with the highest spirit of devotion, inasmuch as the demands made of them will, in most cases, be greater than those made of the rest of the troops. However, in matters of food they have no right to any special exemption.

Every guerrilla fighter carries his own complete equipment, but there are a number of articles of special social importance to the column which must be fairly distributed. For these two criteria may be established, depending on the numbers of unarmed persons in the troop. One solution is to distribute all the objects such as medical supplies, extra food, clothing, general surplus foods, and heavy weapons equally among all platoons. Each platoon would then be responsible for the custody of the material assigned to it. Every captain would distribute the goods among the squads and each squad leader would distribute them among his men. Another solution when there are unarmed men in the troops, is to form squads or platoons especially entrusted with the transportation of these supplies. Using these men will be very beneficial, since it unburdens the combat soldier while those who are unarmed do not have the weight or the responsibility of the rifle. In this manner, the danger of losing supplies is reduced; in addition, they are more concentrated. At the same time, this arrangement constitutes an incentive for the porters to carry more and to demonstrate more enthusiasm because one of the rewards may be the opportunity to carry a rifle in the future. Such platoons should march last in the column and should have the same duties and receive the same treatment as the rest of the troops.

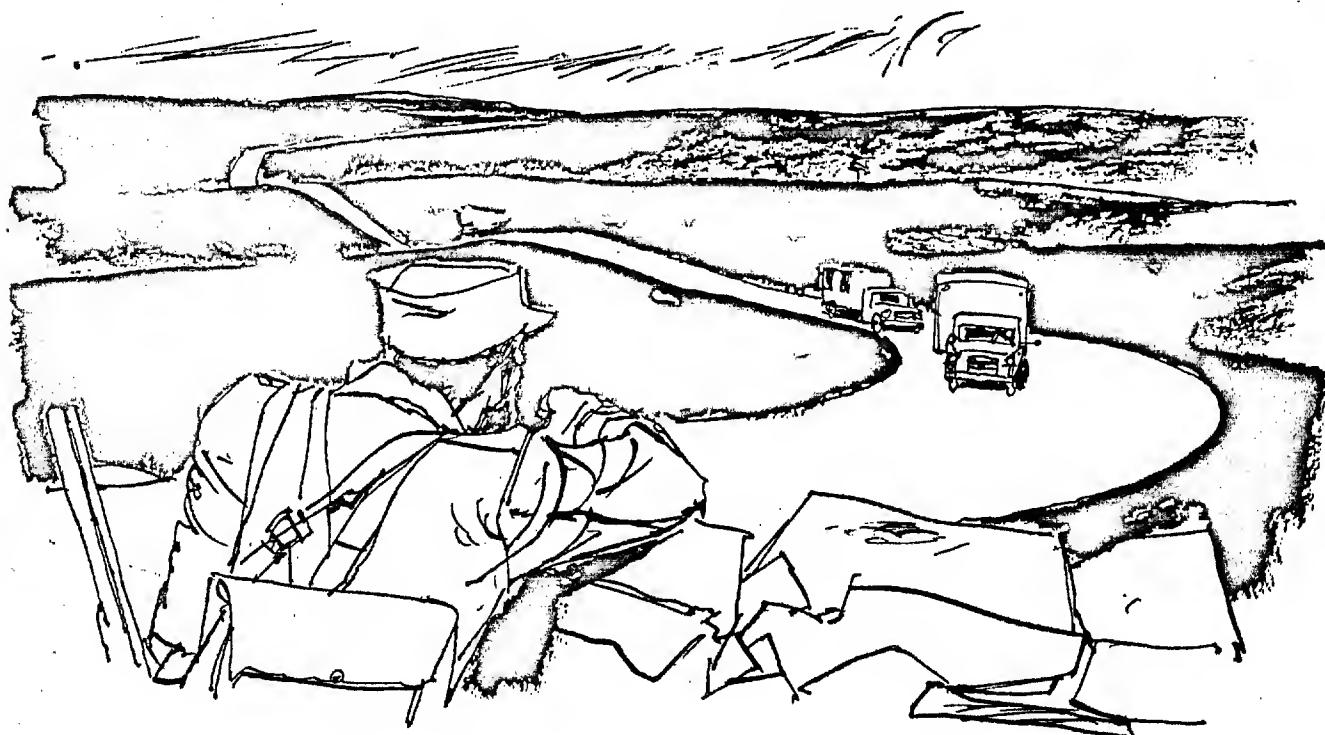
The tasks to be executed by a column vary with its activities. If it remains permanently in the encampment, it must have special security teams. Seasoned, specialized troops should be detailed to this task which should entitle them to some premium. This, in general, might consist of some independence or in some surplus delicacies or tobacco to be distributed among members of units which have extraordinary tasks. Of course, these supplies must have been initially distributed to the entire column. For example, if there are 100 men and 115 packages of cigarettes, these 15 extra packages could be distributed among the members of the units to which I have referred. The vanguard and the rear guard, distinct from the rest, will have as their duty the primary responsibility for security. Nevertheless, each platoon must keep up its own. The more that areas distant from the encampment are kept under surveillance—if the camp is in open space—the greater the security of the group.

The places selected must be at some altitude; they must command a wide area by day and be difficult to approach at night. If several days are to be spent there, it is convenient to establish defensive works which allow and sustain adequate fire in case of attack. These defenses may be destroyed as the guerrillas withdraw from the site. If circumstances do not require the absolute

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obliteration of the column's tracks, they may simply be abandoned.

At sites where permanent encampments are set up, defenses must be clearly and perfectly established. It must be noted that in mountainous areas the mortar is the only effective heavy weapon. Using cover suited to the materials of the area (timber, stones), perfect shelters can be

enforced over the column. Orders are passed along by gestures or whispers from person to person until the last man is reached. If the guerrilla force marches through unfamiliar areas, clearing a path for itself or being guided by someone, the vanguard will precede it by some 100 or 200 meters as dictated by the terrain. In places where confusion may arise as to the route,



built which will impede the approach of enemy forces and protect your men from howitzer fire.

It is very important to maintain discipline within the encampment. Discipline must retain educational characteristics. The guerrillas must go to bed and arise at definite hours. They must not be permitted to engage in games which do not have a social function or which have a tendency to impair the morals of the troop. Alcoholic beverages and gambling must be forbidden. Supervision should be entrusted to a commission on internal order elected from among the fighters of greatest revolutionary merit. Among other duties they prevent the kindling of fires visible from a distance at night and betraying columns of smoke during daylight. They also make sure that the encampment is thoroughly policed when the column leaves it, if it is desired to keep secret the halt made at that site.

Much care must be taken with campfires because their traces remain a long time. It may be necessary to cover them with earth and to also bury papers, tin cans, and food waste.

one man is stationed at each fork in the road to wait for the next group, and so on until the last of the rear guard has been reached. The rear guard will also march separately from the rest of the column to watch the paths left behind and to attempt to conceal the column's tracks. If side-paths offer danger, there must be a group to watch such paths until the last man has passed. It is most practical that these groups be provided from one special platoon. However, they can also come from each platoon, in which case each group would entrust its mission to the group of the next platoon and return to its place; and so on until the entire troop has passed.

Not only must the march be at a specified pace; it must always be maintained in an established order so that it shall be known that Platoon No. 1 is the vanguard; that Platoon No. 2 comes next; that in the middle is Platoon No. 3 with the headquarters; then follows Platoon No. 4; and finally, that the rear guard is Platoon No. 5. Regardless of the number of platoons in the column, their order must always be maintained.

and the ranks closed so that no one loses his way and thereby creates risks from voices being raised or lights being lit. At night light is the guerrilla's enemy.

Of course, if this march has as its object an attack, when the desired place has been reached to which all will return after the mission has been fulfilled, all superfluous equipment (knapsacks, pots, and so on) should be left behind so that each platoon will proceed only with its arms and other battle equipment. The target of the attack must have been studied by trustworthy men who will have made the contacts, observed the pattern of enemy guards, the layout of the position, the number of men defending it, and so on. Then the definitive plan of attack is made, and the fighters station themselves. It must be remembered, however, that a sizable part of the troops must be reserved to engage enemy reinforcements. The enemy's attack on the position may be only a ruse designed to lure reinforcements into an ambush. Therefore, one man must be able to quickly communicate with the command post because it may be necessary to retreat quickly in order to prevent being attacked from the rear. In any case, guards must always be posted along the approaches to the combat area when the siege is being initiated or a direct attack takes place.

When besieging, one need only to wait and to dig trenches which come ever closer to the enemy⁵ thus always trying to come to grips with him by all means. Above all, one should try with fire to make him come out. When he is well encircled, the Molotov cocktail is extraordinarily effective. If one is not within range of a cocktail, he can use a shotgun with special attachment. This consists of a 16-gauge sawed-off shotgun to which a pair of supports has been attached in such a manner that with the end of the butt stock they form a tripod. When so prepared, the weapon rests at an angle of about 45 degrees. This can be varied by moving the supports forward or backward. The weapon is loaded with an open cartridge which has been emptied of shot. The cartridge is then perfectly suited to receive a stick which becomes the projectile and protrudes from the mouth of the shotgun barrel. To the protruding end of the stick is attached a tin with a rubber buffer and a gasoline bottle. This apparatus will throw incendiary bottles 100 meters or more and can be aimed rather accurately. It is the ideal weapon for sieges in which the enemy has many fortifications made of wood or inflammable material. It is also good for shooting at tanks in rugged terrain.

Once the siege has ended with a triumph, or

⁵ Oddly enough, for all his disdain for conventional warfare this is the classic seventeenth and eighteenth century method of warfare.

has been raised after the objective has been achieved, all the platoons retire in their normal order to pick up their knapsacks and return to normal life.

The organization, fighting ability, heroism and spirit of the guerrilla group will undergo their most crucial test during a siege—the most dangerous situation in a war. In the jargon of our guerrilla fighters during our war, the term "siege anxiety" was applied to the anxious expression some of the scared ones wore. The officials of the deposed regime pompously referred to their campaigns as "siege and annihilation." Nonetheless, for a guerrilla force familiar with the terrain, united ideologically and emotionally with the leader, this is not a serious problem. All that one need do is to take shelter, try to prevent the advance of the enemy, impede his use of heavy equipment, and await the night, the natural ally of the guerrilla fighter. When it becomes dark, then, with greatest silence possible, and after having explored and chosen the best path, the guerrilla force will utilize the best available means of escape while observing complete silence. Under such conditions it is very difficult to impede the escape of a group of men from a siege.

Combat

Vulnerable are the vanguards and the point men are marked for mayhem by the guerrilla, who also uses encirclement and night attack as morale-breaking maneuvers.

During the first stage of guerrilla warfare, enemy columns will make deep incursions into rebel territory. According to the strengths of these columns, two types of attack can be made. One, systematically carried out over a period of months, will cause the enemy forces to lose their offensive capability. It habitually precedes the other type, and is carried out against the vanguards. Unfavorable terrain will prevent the column from advancing with adequate defense on their flanks. In this manner, there will always be a portion of the vanguard which penetrates and exposes its members as it seeks to assure the security of the rest of the column. The vanguard usually is a small force and cannot count upon reserves. Therefore, no matter how strong the remainder of the enemy's force, the destruction of this tip of the vanguard will always occur. The system is simple and requires only a little coordination. The moment the head of the vanguard appears at the pre-determined place, the attacking guerrilla force must, as suddenly as

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deliver a powerful blow. A small group contains the rest of the column for a few moments so that weapons, ammunition, and equipment can be gathered. The guerrilla soldier must always be aware that the enemy is the source of his weapons. Except for special circumstances, he must not wage a battle which is not likely to gain him such equipment.

When the strength of the guerrilla force permits, the enemy column should be completely encircled. At least, this must be the impression



created.⁶ In such an instance, the guerrilla vanguard must be so strong and so well entrenched that it can resist a frontal assault. At the instant the enemy is held up in some special place, the guerrilla forces of the rear guard attack his flanks. Inasmuch as the selected place will have

⁶ Mao, *op. cit.*, 130: "Ingenious devices such as making a noise in the east while attacking in the west, appearing now in the south and now in the north, hit-and-run and night action should be constantly employed to mislead, entice and confuse the enemy." In addition, Mao gives a dissertation on the guerrilla view on encirclement.

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characteristics which will make flank maneuvers difficult for the enemy, it will be easy to station snipers who will be able to contain the entire column—perhaps eight or 10 times greater in number—within the circle of fire. When that happens (provided, of course, there are sufficient men), all routes must be blocked in order to deny him any reinforcements. Gradually, the circle must be tightened, especially at night. The guerrilla has faith in the night, but the enemy's fear will increase in the darkness.

In this manner, an enemy column can be totally destroyed with relative ease. Or such heavy losses can be inflicted upon it as to force a return to camp and require much time for regrouping.

When the guerrilla force is very small, and it is desired by all means to detain the enemy column or to slow its advance, groups of sharpshooters should be used. They should number from two to 10 men stationed at each of the four cardinal points around the column. In this manner, the enemy column will be fired upon from the right flank, for instance. When the enemy centers his attention on this flank and attacks it, he will, at that precise moment, be fired upon from the opposite flank. At still another moment, the rear guard will be attacked, or the vanguard, and so on. With a small expenditure of ammunition the enemy can be permanently held in check.

The technique for attacking a convoy or an enemy position must be adapted to suit the conditions or the site selected for combat. Generally, one must be certain that the first attack upon an encircled place will be a surprise during darkness against some advance post.⁷ If one has the advantage of surprise, an attack carried out by fearless men can easily liquidate a position. For a regular siege, the escape routes can be controlled with a few men. Moreover, the access routes can be defended with men so dispersed and concealed that if one of them is passed, he can withdraw or simply yield while a second sniper remains, and so on. In situations where the factor of surprise does not exist, success or failure of the attempt to take the encampment will depend on the ability of the besieging force to contain the efforts of the relief columns. In such instances the enemy will usually have the support of artillery, mortars, and airplanes in addition to tanks.

In terrain suitable for guerrilla warfare, the tank is not very formidable. It must pass through narrow paths and is easy prey to mines. In general, the offensive capability which these vehicles have when in formation, loses its value because they must proceed in single file or, at the most,

⁷ *Ibid.*, 124: "The basic principle of guerrilla warfare must be one of offensive, and its offensive character is even more pronounced than that of regular warfare; furthermore, such offensive must take the form of surprise attack."

two by two. The best and safest weapon against tanks is the mine; but in hand-to-hand fighting so easy to execute in rugged terrain, the Molotov cocktail is of extraordinary value. We have not yet mentioned the bazooka which can be a most decisive weapon for a guerrilla force. However, they are difficult to obtain at least during the early days of a guerrilla war.

A covered trench affords protection against mortar fire. The mortar is a formidable weapon against an encircled force. Conversely, its use against moving targets diminishes its power unless it is used in great numbers. Artillery is not very important in this kind of struggle since it must be sited in places of easy access, and it cannot reach targets which move about. Aircraft are the principal arms of the oppressing forces, but their power of attack is much reduced by the fact that small, concealed trenches are their only targets. They can drop high-explosive bombs or bombs of jellied gasoline, but these are more a nuisance than a real danger. Moreover, whenever one has come as close as possible to the enemy's defensive lines, attacks by enemy aircraft endanger the positions of his vanguard.

A good means of defense against armored cars are steep ditches dug across their path in such a way that the vehicles easily fall into them, but have difficulty coming out. These ditches are easily concealed from the enemy, especially during night marches or when he cannot order infantry to precede the tanks because of the resistance of the guerrilla forces.

Another common form of enemy advance, in areas that are not very rugged, is in trucks that are more or less open. The columns are preceded by some armored vehicles followed by infantry in trucks. According to the strength of the guerrilla force, the entire column can be encircled, or it can be decimated by attacking some of the trucks and simultaneously exploding mines. Then one must act rapidly to gather up the weapons of fallen enemies and withdraw. If conditions allow it, a total siege can be executed.

The shotgun is an excellent weapon for attacking open trucks, and it should be utilized to the fullest extent of its power. The shot pattern of a 16-gauge shotgun loaded with buckshot can cover 10 meters, killing some of the truck's occupants, wounding others, and causing great confusion. Hand grenades are also excellent for such attacks.

Ammunition is the greatest problem of the guerrilla fighter. Weapons can almost always be obtained and kept by the guerrilla force. However, once ammunition is fired, it is gone. Usually, weapons are captured with their ammunition but only very rarely is ammunition alone seized. Not every

can contribute to the total supply since there is no reserve stock. The tactical principle of conserving rounds is fundamental in this type of war.

No guerrilla leader, who thinks of himself as such, would neglect the retreat. A retreat must be well timed, nimble, and insure the recovery of all wounded men and equipment, be it knapsacks, ammunition, or other materiel. A rebel must never be surprised while in retreat, nor must he permit the course of the struggle to encircle him.

For all these reasons, the path selected must be watched at all points from which the enemy forces might possibly advance with troops in order to attempt to close a circle. A message system must be established which permits rapid warning to comrades that some force is attempting to encircle them.

During the battle, there should always be unarmed men. These men will recover the rifle of a wounded or fallen comrade, or seize the weapon of a prisoner. They can be put in charge of prisoners, transport the wounded, or carry messages. It is important to have a good group of messengers of proved ability, and with feet of iron, who can forward the necessary messages expeditiously.

There are many variations in the number of men that are required in addition to armed fighters, but they may be reckoned at two or three for every 10 fighters. Among them are some who aid the fight by acting as rear guards, or defending the lines of retreat, or establishing the messenger system.

When a defensive type of war is waged—that is, when the guerrilla force is engaged in preventing an invading column from passing a specific point—then the fight becomes a war of positions. The already mentioned element of surprise must always be sought from the beginning. The entire defensive apparatus must be established in such a manner that the enemy vanguard always falls into an ambush.⁸ A very important point to remember is the psychology connected with the fact that in a fight, invariably the enemy in the vanguard are killed. This creates in the opposite army a disinclination to be part of the vanguard. It is obvious that a column which does not have a vanguard cannot move unless someone assumes this responsibility.

It becomes clear that more men and more weapons are required in defense than in offense. It is clear that many soldiers are required to block off all the possible paths—and they can be many—leading to a zone. Here additional use must be made of all traps and means of attack

⁸ *Ibid.*, 125: "Gather a big force to strike at an enemy segment, remains one of the principles for field operations

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against armored vehicles, and strict security must be established to protect trench networks. In general, in this type of combat, the order must be given to die in defense; but every defender must be given the greatest chance of survival.

The more concealed a trench is from distant observation, the better. Above all, it is well to cover it with a roof to neutralize the effect of mortars. The shells of mortars used in the field—those of 60 or 81 millimeters—cannot go through a good roof well constructed out of the materials of the area. These may be a layer of wood, earth, or stones covered with some material which hides the roof from the view of the enemy. The shelter must always have an exit which will enable the defender to escape in emergencies without greatly endangering his life.

In this type of war, the work of those not directly concerned with fighting (those who do not carry a weapon) is extremely important. We have already stated several characteristics of communications in places of combat. These communications are a branch within the guerrilla organization. Communication with the farthest headquarters, or with the farthest group of guerrillas, if there is one, must be so established that it is always possible to reach them by the most rapid method known in the region. This is as true in areas easily defended—that is, in terrain suited to guerrilla warfare—as it is in unsuitable terrain. It cannot be expected, for instance, that a guerrilla force fighting in unsuitable terrain would be able to use modern systems of communications. This is because such installations can be of use only to fixed garrisons that can defend such systems.

In all these situations, we have been talking of our own war of liberation. Communications are complemented by daily and correct intelligence concerning all the activities of the enemy. The espionage system must be very well studied, well worked out, and its agents chosen with maximum care. Enormous harm can be done by a counter spy. Even without referring to such an extreme example, great harm can result from incorrect information, regardless of whether it tends to exaggerate or underestimate dangers.

A most important characteristic of guerrilla war is the notable difference between the information the rebel force possesses and that known to the enemy. The enemy's agents must pass through zones that are totally hostile; they encounter the gloomy silence of the populace. In each case the defenders can count on a friend or a relative.

It is clear that preparation must be made to expel the enemy from the affected territory. Guerrillas must profoundly upset methods of supply and completely destroy lines of communication. The disruption of enemy efforts to supply himself forces him to invest large numbers of men in such attempts.

In all these combat situations, very important factors are reserves and, if at all possible, their proper utilization. The guerrilla army, by its very character, can count on reserves in only few instances. Therefore, when involved in an action, the efforts of even the last individual must be regulated and fully utilized. However, despite these characteristics a number of men must be kept ready to respond to an unforeseen situation, to contain a counter offensive, or to help decide a situation at a precise moment. Depending upon the organization of the guerrilla force and the situation at the time, a "general utility platoon" must be held ready for such necessities. Such a platoon must always reach those places in greatest danger. It might be called "the suicide platoon" or some other such name, but in reality it will have to accomplish the functions which the name indicates. This suicide platoon must get to all the places where the action will be decided: attacks designed to surprise the vanguard, defense of those sites that are most vulnerable and most dangerous, or any place from which the enemy may threaten to break the stability of the firing line. Such a platoon must be composed entirely of volunteers, and it should be considered almost a privilege for a guerrilla fighter to be admitted to membership. In time such a platoon will become the spoiled child of the guerrilla column, and any fighter in this unit can count on the respect and admiration of all his colleagues.

Concluded next month with

Organization of the Guerrilla Front

Supply

Civilian Organization

Role of Women

Health

Sabotage

War Industry

Information

Training and Indoctrination

TODAY the fashion is to speak knowingly and at great length about nonexistent organizations possessing catchy names which will supposedly operate in not-yet-too-well-defined environments. Although this freewheeling express(ion) of future doctrine is generally well constructed and is usually given the green light, some passengers believe the limited should not travel too fast.

This apprehension prevails because somewhere along the track from ROTAD, ROCID, and ROCAD, through MOMAR to MAXMAR, one station seems to have been by-passed. The sign at this neglected scheduled stop reads: NOWAR. (Rhymes with "how are.")

Before evaluating the usual considerations of inherent mobility, increased fire power, and wide-ranging communications, a word of explanation—NOWAR does not stand for "Novel Optimum Weapons Army" and it does not mean "no war." Just as FUTAR is the abbreviation for "future Army" and THENAR for "then Army," NOWAR is the short title for the "now Army." Now Army could have been shortened to NOAR, but to some this would connote "no Army."

All NOWAR components are prefixed by an adjectival now as in NOWMOB (now mobility), NOWWPNS (now weapons), NOWCOMM (now communications) and NOWSOLD (now soldier). One more important background note before further discussion; the time frame for NOWAR is *right now!*

On land, NOWAR's transportation is carried on

To deliver NOWBULLS and NOWSHELLS to the enemy, NOWSOLDS have been issued faster firing and more dependable NOWRIFLES and NOWGUNS.

(Note: The NOWAR howitzer is a HOWNOW, not a NOWHOW.)

Tactically, the radio provides the foundation for communications. The THENPHONE, invented about 1876, has been improved and is employed for the majority of administrative traffic. Television has gained

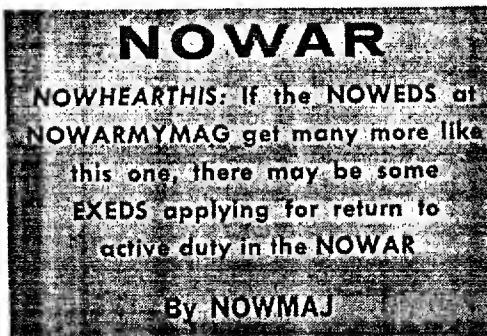
stature in NOWAK, but is installed mainly in day rooms and service clubs frequented by NOWSOLDS. The THENTELEGRAPH is placed in operation when needed, except that its modern relative—the NOWTELETYPEWRITER—receives and sends more messages. Automatic data processing is a phrase sometimes heard in the ranks of NOWAR, although many NOWSOLDS persist in alluding to it as "the electronic brain."

Not too many solar-powered helmet radios are found in the NOWINF. As a matter of fact, NOWINF officers often place emphasis on voice commands and even require that some training time be devoted to hand and arm signals. However, signal flags and lamps are definitely passé.

The NOWAR NOWSOLD

The NOWSOLD has not changed to any great degree from the THENSOLD, and indications point to the FUTSOLD adhering to original design.

The NOWAR NOWSOLD is interested in FUTAR, MAXMAR and all the rest, but he is more concerned with his



La Guerra de Guerrillas

Concluding our condensation of Che Guevara's book on the lessons learned by Castro's rebel forces

Chapter III. Organization of the Guerrilla Front

Supply

A guerrilla force is not self-sustaining. Chow, clothing, munitions—all of the requirements of war—must be obtained by capture or theft and from farmers in areas where the guerrillas are operating.

Proper supply is fundamental for the guerrilla. The group of men, in touch with the soil, have to live off the products of that soil. At the same time they must allow the people who live in the area to continue to live.

In the beginning, one will live only on what the farmers may have. It will be possible to go to some store to buy something, but never to have supply lines, because there is no area in which to set them up.

Slowly, the area will be cleared, and then one can count on a greater ease in being able to act. The fundamental rule is to always pay for any goods taken from a friend. These goods may be the products of the soil or of commercial establishments. Many times these things are donated; but there are other times when the economic conditions of the same rural area make gifts impossible. There are times when the very needs of war make it impossible to pay simply because of

lack of money. In such instances the businessman should always be given a requisition or an IOU—something that certifies the debt.

If conditions continue to improve, taxes can be imposed. These should be as light as possible, especially for the small producer. Above all, care must be taken to maintain good relations between the farmers and the guerrilla army which comes from that class of society.

Meat is of prime necessity. If a secure area cannot be had, farms should be set up by farmers



Fidel Castro firing sniper rifle equipped with telescopic sight during a lull in the revolution

not connected with the rebel army. These farms should be dedicated to the production of chickens, eggs, and livestock that can be killed and their meat preserved.

In this way, hides are also obtained. Then a tanning industry—more or less elementary—can be developed to provide the necessary material for ~~shoes~~, a fundamental need for fighting.

Salt is vital. When near the sea, it is necessary to set up small salt-drying basins which will assure the required production to provide a surplus after supplying the troops.

There will come a time when problems of supplying food to the troops in the area will be solved. Yet many other products will be needed: hides for shoes, if a leather industry cannot be created that will supply the zone; material for clothing and other necessary things for the same troops; paper, newsprint, or a mimeograph machine, ink, and all the other accessories.

The need for articles from the outside world will increase as the guerrillas continue to organize and as their organization becomes more complex. In order to protect the organization adequately, it is vital that the organization for the line of supply functions perfectly.

In all supply lines that pass through the countryside, it is necessary to have a series of houses, terminals, or way stations where supplies can be hidden during the day, ready to continue the following night. These houses should be known only to those directly in charge of supplies. The inhabitants of the house should be told as little as possible, even though they are people in whom the organization has great confidence.

Civilian Organization

Senor Inside and Senor Outside are both important to the guerrilla force which must depend upon, but never trust, civilians within its zone of operations—and enlist support and supply from outside sources.

The civilian organization of the insurrectionary movement is very important on both the internal and the external fronts. First, we will describe the work of the internal front.

We can say that the internal front is dominated, at least relatively, by the liberation forces. Also, it is supposed to be a region adequate for guerrilla warfare. When these conditions do not exist (that is, when guerrilla battles are developing in areas that are not suitable), the guerrilla organization extends but does not increase in depth.

cannot have an internal organization because the whole region is permeated by the enemy. On the internal front, we can have a series of organizations which carry on their specific mission of better functioning of the administration.

It must always be kept in mind that the zone must never, for any reason, be impoverished by the direct action of the rebel army. Indirectly, however, such direct action may be the cause of impoverishment because it precipitates an enemy blockade. The enemy's propaganda will attempt to blame the guerrillas for the condition. For precisely this reason, direct causes of conflict should not be created. For example, there should be no regulations to prevent farmers in the liberated territory from selling their products outside this area, except under certain extreme or transitory circumstances which should be carefully explained to them.

Farmers should also have connections which will permit the organization of the guerrilla army, at any moment, to direct the disposal of harvests and sell them in enemy territory through a series of more or less benevolent middlemen benefactors (more or less) of the farmer class. In all such cases, along with the devotion to the cause which makes the merchant defy the dangers involved, cupidity naturally makes him take these risks to gain profits.

When the guerrilla group has achieved a certain measure of development, it should establish a series of routes varying from the tiny footpath, only wide enough for a mule, to the good truck road. As a general rule, these roads help overcome the supply problem in areas where there is no other solution. They should not be used except under circumstances where it is almost certain that the position can be maintained against an enemy attack. The roads should be established between points that make communications convenient but not vital. No danger should be involved in their construction.

Other means of communication can also be established. A very important one is the telephone, which can be spread across the mountains by using the trees as wire posts. The wires cannot be observed from above by the enemy. In the use of the telephone, we presuppose an area that the enemy cannot penetrate.

Storehouses are very important. In establishing a point where a beginning of permanent guerrilla organization may be undertaken, very well-kept storehouses should be set up to assure minimum care of merchandise and, above all, to control its equitable distribution.

On the external front, the functions are different as regards both quality and quantity. For example, propaganda should be of a national and

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workers and farmers to successful battles and give news of victories achieved on the local front. Tax collecting must be totally clandestine, the utmost care being taken to protect the entire chain from the smallest collector to the treasurer of the organization.

This organization should be spread out in complementary zones to form a whole. The zones can be provinces, counties, states, cities, or villages, depending on the size of the movement. In all of these, there must be a finance committee which will take care of the organization of tax collections. Money can be collected by means of bonds or direct donations or even, if the war is far

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tion inside and outside of guerrilla territory during a people's struggle. I repeat that I speak from my experience in Cuba. We are providing a framework, not a bible.

Role of Women

Women have abilities as communicators and culinary artists but they are not necessarily deadlier than the male.

The role that women can play, in the whole development of the revolutionary process, is extraordinarily important. It is well to emphasize this, because in all countries with a colonial mentality, a woman is underestimated to the extent that there is real discrimination against her.

Naturally, there are not many women combatants. When the internal front has been consolidated and the least indispensable combatants are being discharged, women can be set to work at a considerable number of specific occupations. One of the most important—perhaps the most important—would be communications between different combat forces; above all, those in enemy territory.

As a simple messenger, whether the message be oral or written, the woman is much freer than a man. She attracts less attention and, at the same time, inspires less of a feeling of fear in any enemy soldier, who often commits his brutal acts out of fear of an unknown force that may attack him, for that is the way the guerrillas operate.

Contacts between forces separated from each other, messages beyond the lines and even outside the country, including things of some size such as bullets, are carried by women in special underclothing. But all the time they also can carry on their usual peacetime pursuits. To be able to count on a well-prepared meal is very pleasing to a soldier subjected to the hard conditions of guerrilla life.

A very important job for women is the teaching of elementary reading and even revolutionary theory. Essentially, they teach not only the local farmers but may also teach the revolutionary soldiers. The school administration (part of the civilian organization) should rely fundamentally on women because they are able to inculcate greater enthusiasm in children and have the sympathy of the school population.

In health affairs, women play important roles as nurses or even doctors because they have a tenderness infinitely greater than that of a rude companion in arms, a tenderness which is so much appreciated when a woman is a doctor without



enough advanced, through taxes. The industrialist will have to pay taxes because of the great strength of the insurrectionary army.

Supply should be conditioned to the needs of the guerrillas. It must be so organized that merchandise moves in a chain. The more common articles are procured in nearby places. Scarce ones, or those impossible to get anywhere else, can be sought from the major centers. Thus, one tries to keep the chain a limited one: the mission must be known to as few people as possible in order to make the chain last longer.

This is the framework of a civilian organiza-

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Approved For Release 2001/03/02 : any comforts, perhaps suffering great pain, and exposed to the many dangers of this kind of war.

Health

Medical care is in direct ratio to the success of the guerrilla force, ranging from primitive in the early days to modern hospitalization as success crowns the revolution.

The organization of hospitals depends greatly on the stage of development of the guerrillas. We can distinguish three fundamental types of hospital organizations which correspond to stages of development of the guerrilla's fight.

In this historic development, we have first the nomad phase. In this, the doctor, if this is what he is, travels constantly with his companions. He is simply one more man and very probably has to carry on all the other functions of a guerrilla, including fighting. Always he will have with him the tiring and at times hopeless task of treating casualties who could be saved with proper treatment. However, the means do not always exist for such treatment. In this state of the development of the guerrillas, the doctor fully realizes his character as a true altruist who brings to the men the necessary consolation from his poorly equipped knapsack.

In the course of normal events in guerrilla warfare, one becomes "semi-nomad." At this time, there are camps that are frequented by guerrilla troops. There are friendly houses that can be completely trusted, where things can be taken care of, where the injured may be left, and where each time the tendency of the troops to spend time is more marked. At this time the doctor's job is less fatiguing. He can have emergency surgical equipment in his knapsack, and at a friendly house a more complete set for less hasty operations. During this semi-nomad phase, if one can get to places completely inaccessible to the enemy, there can be hospitals or nursing homes where the sick and wounded can recuperate.

In the third phase, there are areas that the enemy cannot control and where a true hospital organization can be established.

When a man falls in the front line, some stretcher bearers, if the guerrilla organization has them, will carry him to the first-aid post. Then the soldier passes through the first hospital and on to a second center where there are surgeons and specialists, depending on the organization. At this center, all necessary operations are performed to save his life or to improve his condition. This is the second echelon.

Afterwards in the third echelon, hospitals are

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set up with the greatest possible number of modern conveniences for the close examination of wounds or to diagnose any illness which may also affect the inhabitants of the area. These hospitals in the third group correspond to those in a settled community. They are not only centers of rehabilitation and of surgery that is not urgent, but in addition, are connected with the civilian population so that hygienists can carry on their teaching function. Dispensaries should also be set up which permit adequate personal attention. The hospitals of this third echelon will be able to have, depending on the supply capacity of the civilian organizations, facilities that will allow laboratory diagnosis and X-raying.

Necessary medicines should be obtained through contacts with health organizations in the enemy's rear area. Sometimes they can be had even from the International Red Cross. However, one should not count on this, especially in the early days of the struggle. It is necessary to organize an administration that will permit the rapid transportation of needed medicines in case of danger and to continue to supply everything necessary to all hospitals, military and civilian.

Sabotage

Indiscriminate sabotage has little purpose; carefully planned, it is perhaps the best tool in the hands of determined revolutionaries.

Sabotage is an invaluable weapon of people who fight a guerrilla war. Its organization corresponds to the civilian or underground part, because sabotage should obviously be carried on only outside the areas controlled by the rebel army. But this organization should be commanded by and receive orders only directly from the guerrilla general staff which decides the industries, communications, or other types of objectives to be attacked.

Sabotage has nothing to do with terrorism. Terrorism and personal assassination are absolutely different phases. We sincerely believe that terrorism is a negative weapon which in no way produces the desired effects. It can turn people against a revolutionary movement, and it brings with it a loss of lives among those taking part which is much greater than the return. On the other hand, personal assassination is permissible under certain carefully chosen circumstances. It should be performed only when the head of the instruments of repression must be eliminated.

There are two types of sabotage: one on a national scale for certain major objectives, and a local one for the combat lines. On a national scale it is aimed directly at the destruction of all com-

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munications. Rapid communications are the enemy army's greatest weapon against the rebels in less rugged areas. We must, therefore, constantly attack this weapon by destroying railroad bridges, sewers, electric lights, telephones, and aqueducts. Lastly, everything necessary for a normal, modern life should be destroyed.

At certain times, the vital industries of each region will be destroyed with the proper equipment. When this is done, it is necessary to have an over-all concept of the problem and to be sure that one is not unnecessarily destroying the source of employment. Otherwise, hunger and a massive displacement of workers will result. Industries belong to supporters of the regime and should be destroyed unless the destruction brings about very serious social consequences. We must always try to convince the workers of the need for the destruction.

In the combat area also, sabotage should be carried out in the same way, but with much more daring, dedication, and frequency. In these cases, the tremendous help of the quick-moving patrols of the rebel army can be depended upon because they can go down into the zones and assist the members of the civil organization to do the job.

Sabotage includes appropriation of merchandise, cutting supply lines as much as possible, frightening farmers from selling their products, burning vehicles traveling on roads to create roadblocks. In each case of sabotage, it is desirable to have some contact with the enemy, whether at a distance or up close, and to follow the hit-and-run system. It is not necessary to make a big demonstration but only to point out to the adversary that, where there is sabotage, there also are guerrilla forces ready to fight. This causes him to keep his troop strength up and to move carefully or not at all.

In this way, all cities near the guerrilla zone of operations will slowly become paralyzed.

War Industry

Movement and applied firepower are the prime requirements for a successful guerrilla force—therefore shoe-making and gunsmithing are important war industries.

In the guerrilla army's view, war industry is the product of a fairly long development. Moreover, it should be well located geographically. As soon as zones are liberated and tight blockades set up around the enemy's supplies, the necessary different departments will be organized. We have already covered this.

So far as manufacturing is concerned, there are

two fundamentals: shoe-making and leather-working. Troops cannot walk without shoes in rough and stony terrain. It is very difficult to march under these conditions, and only natives of the area, and not even all of them, can do it. The rest must have shoes.

The rebel shoe industry is divided into two parts: one applies half soles and repairs damaged shoes, the other makes crude shoes. The rebel force should be able to count on a small shoe machine, very easily come by in these areas, to set up a cottage type industry operated by many persons. Along with shoe-making should go the machine shop where all sorts of canvas or leather equipment used by the troops can be made and repaired. These include cartridge belts and knapsacks, which, while not vital, contribute to comfort and give the troops a feeling of self-sufficiency and well-being.

Another basic industry for small internal organizations of guerrillas is the gunsmith's. It also has a variety of functions: repair of small arms, the manufacture of some types of weapons invented locally, and the construction and handling of mines with varied mechanisms. When conditions are good, it is wise to join to this an outfit for manufacturing powder.

Someone should be in charge of communications, too. He would be not only in charge of communications relating to propaganda and with the outside world, such as the radio, but also the telephones and all types of roads, and he depends on the necessary civil organization to carry on his job. It must be remembered that we are at war, that we can be attacked by the enemy and that, at times, many lives depend on rapid communications.

To keep the troops content, it is well to have cigar or cigarette factories. Leaf tobacco can be purchased in selected places and then brought to the free area where it can be prepared for consumption.

Another important industry is tanning. These are simply undertakings which can be carried on anywhere and are adapted to the situation of the guerrillas. Tanning requires certain small concrete buildings and a great deal of salt. However, it is a tremendous advantage to the shoe-making industry to have its raw material right at hand.

Salt should be made in the territory of the revolution, concentrating it in large amounts. To make salt, it is necessary to go to areas of high saline concentration and to evaporate it. The sea is the best source. It is not necessary to purify the salt by removing all attached impurities because it can be eaten in its simple form. However, at first it doesn't taste very good.

Meat should be preserved as jerked beef. This is simple to do and is a means of saving many

lives in a serious situation. For a long time it can be preserved with salt in large barrels. It can be prepared regardless of the external situation.

Information

Intelligence, obtained by any means, and Fifth Column activities to sow terror are potent guerrilla weapons.

"Know yourself and your enemy and you will be able to fight a hundred battles without defeat." This Chinese maxim is as worthwhile for guerrilla war as a biblical psalm. Nothing helps a fighting force more than correct information. It should be spontaneously given by the inhabitants of the area where the army will be and it should deal with what is going on in a specific place. Moreover, it should be reliable. Women should infiltrate and make permanent contact with the enemy soldiers and slowly find out what we need to know. A coordinated system must be devised to permit the crossing of enemy lines into the guerrilla camp without a hitch.

If this is done well and by capable agents, it will be possible to sleep sounder in the insurgent camp.

In those areas where the guerrilla organization is dominant or which it frequently visits, all people are its information agents. Nevertheless,

it is good to have people especially selected for this purpose because one cannot depend on the views of farmers, so accustomed to exaggerate and who know little of the precise language of war. One will be able to make the information machinery not only the very important auxiliary arm that it is, but also a counteroffensive agent. This can be done, for example, by means of the "sowers of fear" who may move about among enemy soldiers to sow fear and instability. Mobility, the primary tactic, can be developed to the maximum. By knowing exactly the places where the enemy troops are going to attack, it is very easy to run away or, in time, to attack them in the most unexpected places.

Training and Indoctrination

Guerrillas receive basic, too. Weapons firing is the heavy class but they learn other arts of war as well. And "troop information" appears—even in the field.

The very life of the guerrilla leader is fundamentally the training of the liberating soldier, and no one can be a leader who has not learned his difficult job in the daily use of his arms. The soldier will be able to live with some companions



who teach him something about the handling of arms, the basic notions of finding one's way, how to behave towards the civilian population, to fight, and other essentials. However, the precious time of the guerrilla leader should not be wasted in the details of instruction. That happens only when there is already a large liberated area, and large numbers of soldiers are needed to perform a combat function. Then basic training centers are established.

At such times these centers perform a very important function. They produce the new soldier who has not yet passed through that great sieve of formidable privations that convert him into a real fighting man. After he has passed through this difficult test, he reaches the stage of joining the circle of a beggar army that leaves no signs of its passing on any side. There must be physical exercises, basically of two types: agile gymnastics with instruction for the commando-type war which demands agility in attack and in retreat; and violent marching which stretches the recruit to the farthest point of endurance and hardens him for this life. He must, above all, get used to life in the open air. He must suffer all the changes of weather in close contact with Nature, as he will do when on guerrilla operations.

The training centers must have workers who take care of its supply functions. For that purpose, there must be stables, barns, orchards, dairy herd—everything to insure that it will not become a burden on the general budget of the guerrilla army. The students can be rotated in the work of supply, assigning it to the worst elements as punishment or simply on a voluntary basis.

All this depends on the characteristics peculiar to the zone where the training center is established. We think it is a good principle to put volunteers there and to fill up the details for necessary work with those who behave the worst or have the least aptitude for learning the art of war.

The center must have its small health organization, with a doctor or male nurse, as conditions allow, to provide recruits with the best possible attention.

Rifle practice is the fundamental element of instruction. The guerrilla must have much training in marksmanship and must be taught to expend the least possible quantity of ammunition.

The most important part of recruit training, and which must never be neglected, is indoctrination. It is important because men come in without a clear conception of why they came; they have vague concepts of personal liberty, freedom of the press, or other logical foundations. Therefore, indoctrination must be instilled for as long a time as possible and with the greatest dedication. During these

country are taught and economic facts are explained clearly as well as the facts which motivated each historic event. The reaction of national heroes to certain injustices are explained; and, afterwards, the domestic situation or the situation in the area is analyzed. This constitutes a single primer which can be well studied by all members of the rebel army as a guide for what will come later.

In addition, there must be a training school for teachers so they can agree on the textbooks to be used and on the experiences which each one may be able to provide in the educational aspect of the movement.

Of all measures of military training, one of the most important is disciplinary punishment. Discipline must be (it is necessary to repeat this again and again) one of the bases for the action of a guerrilla force. Discipline must be, as we also said previously, a force which springs from an internal conviction and which is perfectly reasoned out. In this way, a person develops an internal discipline. When this discipline is broken, it is always necessary to punish the guilty, regardless of his position. His punishment must be drastic, and must be applied in a way that hurts.

This is important, for in a guerrilla soldier loss of liberty does not manifest itself in the same way that duress affects a garrison soldier. Ten days in the guardhouse can be a wonderful rest for a guerrilla soldier: he eats, he does not have to march, he does not work, there is none of the usual guard duty. He can sleep as much as he wants, he can take it easy, he can read, and so on. From this it is deduced that the deprivation of freedom under guerrilla conditions is not advisable.

There are times when the combat morale of the individual is very high, and pride in himself is considerable. The deprivation of his right to bear arms can provoke positive reactions and constitute for him a true punishment. In these cases, it is correct to apply such punishment.

Long periods of guard duty at night and forced marches can also be punishments; but the marches have the grave drawback that they are not practicable because they have no other objective than that of punishment and of tiring out the guerrilla soldier. To insure such punishment requires other guards, who also get tired. Moreover, punitive guard duty has the inconvenient aspect that others must watch the offenders.

In the forces directly under my command, I established for minor infractions the punishment of arrest with deprivation of candy and cigarettes, and total deprivation of food in the worst. Although the punishment was terrible and is advisable only under very special circumstances, the

ARMY

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THE CRITICAL SIX MONTHS. *The inexperienced officer needs rules he can understand.*

Major THOMAS W. BOWEN

June approaches, when our universities and colleges will turn over to the Army their annual output of second lieutenants. At each source of commission, distinguished soldiers and civic leaders will mount the podium to wish the Army's new officers godspeed and offer much sound advice. In future years and in far-flung places this sage advice will be put to excellent use. Unfortunately, it usually does not concern the immediate six-month period of adjustment facing these young officers.

During this period the brand-new lieutenant cannot apply general principles clothed in generalities. He needs specific rules of conduct, the interpretation of which require little or no knowledge or experience. Each new officer sets forth bright-eyed and bushy-tailed to make his mark in the Army. Little does he know that his first six months of service will be a period of frustration coupled with feelings of futility. Despite the best efforts of his ROTC instructors to teach leadership and troop-leading, the average newly commissioned officer will experience a certain feeling of insecurity and inadequacy during those first six months. Even the practical leadership taught at our pre-commission schools is pitched at the service of the lieutenant *after* the first six months as an officer.

We need to direct more of our attention to these months, because for many newcomers they are critical. What advice can you offer the newly commissioned officer that will ease the adjustment during that period? How should a new officer handle himself while his men are sizing him up? Generalities like "know your job" and "know your men" cannot serve the purpose; neither of these glib phrases suffices. The rules must be simple and easy to follow. Try these:

- **Don't talk—listen.** A person can't learn anything while he's talking; he knows what he thinks and what he knows. Let others talk and expound until your

CARS IS OK. *It can do the job*

I believe the Combat Arms Regimental System has contributed greatly to the Army's traditions and heritage.

At the present time CARS is incomplete. We have had the system since 1957, and to all intents and purposes it should have been completely functional by now. However, for some reason progress has been slow. We still await the organization of the regimental headquarters and the assignment of a home station to each regiment.

Captain Approved For Release 2001/03/02 : CIA-RDP78-03581R000300020012-1S, to his

"experience" has seasoned your judgment for at least six months.

- **Don't imitate—observe.** While models frequently serve to show us the way, the slavish aping of mannerisms, actions and methods of another leads only to difficulties. Methods which are effective when used by one person may be ineffective and appear foolish when used by another. Be yourself! Try to place yourself in a subordinate's position and visualize yourself receiving your own instructions.

- **Follow the manuals.** All the information needed by a new junior is in the books. When you don't know, or fail to understand some detail, look it up. What the manual specifies is better and more accurate than what a buddy might happen to remember about a matter. On the other hand, guard against the ever-present tendency to flash the manual as the absolute source of authority.

- **Don't try to change everything overnight.** Rome wasn't built in a day, and your "new" system of command or maintenance or discipline isn't going to revamp the entire Army in a week or two. Conversely, never assume that nothing can be improved, or that your meager effort can't affect anything. It can. But start on the small things first. Let the generals handle the big ones—for a few years, at least.

- **Ask questions with humility.** Never be afraid to say, "I don't understand; show me what you mean." If there is one thing at which the American soldier is uncannily expert, it's uncovering bluffers. He doesn't expect a second lieutenant to know everything. You're no exception, and don't try to be. A corollary to this rule is to suggest, but do so in a questioning tone. "Sergeant, do you think this will work?"

There they are: five simple rules. They won't help? They won't work? Then I offer a sixth: If you haven't tried it, don't knock it!

LT. JOHN G. KELIHER

the December issue, claims the system has destroyed all our infantry regiments. Not so. While tactical considerations of the nuclear era indicated that as tactical units regiments were obsolete, CARS was initiated to insure the survival and continuation of the history, traditions and honors of our old and famous regiments, regardless of future changes in tactical organization. CARS reactivated several famous infantry regiments which had been broken up into battalion-sized units or had become inactive.